
Government of the District of Columbia



Department of Corrections

Testimony

**Thomas Faust
Director**

**D.C. Department of Corrections
Performance Oversight Hearing**

Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety
Tommy Wells, Chair
Council of the District of Columbia

John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20004
Room 500

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12:30 pm

GOOD AFTERNOON CHAIRMAN WELLS AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY AND PUBLIC SAFETY. I AM TOM FAUST, DIRECTOR OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS. JOINING ME AT THE TABLE THIS MORNING ARE DEPUTY DIRECTORS CAROLYN CROSS AND TOM HOEY. I APPRECIATE THE OPPORTUNITY TO TESTIFY TODAY AND RESPOND TO QUESTIONS REGARDING THE DEPARTMENT'S PERFORMANCE IN FISCAL YEARS 2013 AND 2014 TO DATE.

THE DOC SYSTEM INCLUDES TWO PRIMARY CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES—THE D.C. JAIL OR CENTRAL DETENTION FACILITY AND THE CORRECTIONAL TREATMENT FACILITY, CURRENTLY OPERATED BY THE CORRECTIONS CORPORATION OF AMERICA UNDER CONTRACT WITH THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA GOVERNMENT. LAST YEAR

DOC PROCESSED APPROXIMATELY 12,000 INTAKES AND RELEASES INCLUDING PRE-TRIAL DETAINEES, SENTENCED MISDEMEANANTS, FELONS AND PAROLE VIOLATORS.

THE DEPARTMENT ALSO HAS CONTRACTS WITH THREE PRIVATELY OPERATED COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS FACILITIES FOR HALFWAY HOUSE BED SPACE TO ACCOMMODATE 96 MALE AND 25 FEMALE PRE-TRIAL COURT ORDERED DEFENDANTS AND SENTENCED MISDEMEANANTS.

OUR MISSION AS A MEMBER OF THE GOVERNMENT'S PUBLIC SAFETY CLUSTER IS TO ENSURE THE PUBLIC SAFETY OF CITIZENS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA BY PROVIDING AN ORDERLY, SAFE, SECURE AND HUMANE ENVIRONMENT FOR THE CONFINEMENT OF PRETRIAL DETAINEES AND SENTENCED INMATES, WHILE AFFORDING THOSE IN CUSTODY MEANINGFUL OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUCCESSFUL RE-INTEGRATION INTO THE COMMUNITY.

I REMAIN EXTREMELY PROUD OF OUR EMPLOYEES, BOTH UNIFORMED AND CIVILIAN, AS THEY STRIVE TO EXCEL AS PUBLIC SERVANTS TASKED WITH A MOST DIFFICULT BUT LARGELY UNRECOGNIZED RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE CARE AND CUSTODY OF INCARCERATED PERSONS AT ALL CUSTODY LEVELS----- INCLUDING ADULT MALES, FEMALES, AND JUVENILES BEING ADJUDICATED AS ADULTS.

TO MAXIMIZE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF OUR WORKFORCE AND ENSURE EFFICIENT USE OF DISTRICT RESOURCES, POPULATION MANAGEMENT REMAINS A PRIORITY FOR THE DEPARTMENT. DURING 2013 WE CONTINUED TO COLLABORATE WITH OUR LOCAL AND FEDERAL PARTNERS INCLUDING THE USAO, COURTS, THE USMS, AND FBOP TO EXPEDITE THE TIMELY REMOVAL OF INMATES NO LONGER REQUIRING DOC CONFINEMENT.

IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT WITH THE FIRST QUARTER OF FISCAL YEAR 2014, THE AVERAGE TIME BETWEEN

SENTENCING AND FBOP DESIGNATION FOR SENTENCED FELONS WAS 25 DAYS--NOTEWORTHY BECAUSE THIS IS THE FIRST TIME SINCE DOC BEGAN REPORTING THAT THE PERIOD WAS LESS THAN ONE MONTH. FURTHER, FROM OCTOBER 2012 TO DECEMBER 2013, THE DOC AVERAGE DAILY POPULATION, EXCLUDING THE FBOP SHORT TERM SENTENCED FELONS HOUSED AT THE CTF, DROPPED BY 300 INMATES.

WHILE OUR REQUEST FOR A GENERAL INCREASE IN THE PER DIEM FOR HOUSING FEDERAL INMATES CONTINUES TO BE A SUBJECT OF NEGOTIATION, THE AVERAGE LENGTHS OF STAY AND NUMBERS OF FEDERALLY BILLABLE INMATES HOUSED IN DOC FACILITIES HAS DECLINED. WE ATTRIBUTE THIS, AT LEAST IN PART, TO AGGRESSIVE POPULATION MANAGEMENT THROUGH CONSTANTLY WORKING WITH OUR FEDERAL PARTNERS FOR REMOVAL OF INMATES.

AT THIS POINT I WILL DISCUSS A NUMBER OF OUR MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR 2013 WHICH REFLECT EFFORTS TO IMPROVE OPERATIONS, ENHANCE FACILITY SECURITY, AND EXPAND AND REFINE INMATE SERVICES AND PROGRAMMING.

AS PLANNED, THE DEPARTMENT SUCCESSFULLY ASSUMED OVERSIGHT OF THE POLICE CENTRAL CELL BLOCK IN OCTOBER OF 2013. THE TRANSITION OF THIS FUNCTION FROM MPD TO DOC FOLLOWED MONTHS OF COLLABORATION, STRATEGIC PLANNING, AND EFFECTIVE TEAM WORK BETWEEN OUR TWO DEPARTMENTS. FROM THE DATE DOC ASSUMED OVERSIGHT IN OCTOBER THROUGH JANUARY 2014, NEARLY 4,800 ARRESTEES HAVE BEEN PROCESSED THROUGH THE CENTRAL CELL BLOCK.

I AM ESPECIALLY PROUD THAT THE DEPARTMENT WAS ABLE TO AUGMENT THIS OPERATION BY PROVIDING ON-SITE HEALTH CARE SERVICES THROUGH OUR NEW CENTRAL

CELL BLOCK MEDICAL CLINIC. BEGINNING ON DECEMBER 9, 2013, THE FIRST ARRESTEE-PATIENT WAS TREATED IN THE NEW CLINIC WHICH PROVIDES IMMEDIATE MEDICAL TRIAGE AND TREATMENT OF ROUTINE, NON-LIFE THREATENING AILMENTS SUCH AS MINOR CUTS, ABRASIONS, ASTHMA, DIABETES, HYPERTENSION AND OTHER MEDICAL CONDITIONS. AS OF FEBRUARY, OVER 350 INDIVIDUALS HAVE RECEIVED TREATMENT THROUGH THE CLINIC. OF THOSE 350 PLUS ARRESTEES, ONLY 15 (4%) REQUIRED TRANSPORT TO OUTSIDE MEDICAL FACILITIES.

MPD REPORTED THAT IN THE PAST ON ANY GIVEN NIGHT, 18 TO 40 OFFICERS WERE PULLED OFF STREET DUTY TO ASSUME HOSPITAL DETAIL WITH ARRESTEES BEING PROCESSED THROUGH THE CCB. THE TOTAL TIME SPENT OUT-OF-SERVICE WAS EQUIVALENT TO 7 TO 13 OFFICERS FOR A FULL TOUR OF DUTY. CLEARLY, SIGNIFICANT BENEFITS TO PUBLIC SAFETY ARE EXPECTED WITH THE

RETURN OF ADDITIONAL MPD OFFICERS TO POLICING OUR NEIGHBORHOODS AND COMMUNITIES.

AS THE RESULT OF OUR WORKING PARTNERSHIP WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL SERVICES (DGS), CONSTRUCTION OF THE INMATE PROCESSING CENTER BEGAN IN 2013 WITH MAJOR WORK COMPLETED AT THE END OF LAST MONTH. CLOSING OUT THIS VERY IMPORTANT PROJECT, WHICH HAS BEEN IN THE PLANNING STAGES FOR SEVERAL YEARS, IS A MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENT FOR THE DEPARTMENT. THE NEW IPC WILL STREAMLINE THE RECEIVING AND DISCHARGE PROCESS AND CONSOLIDATE CRITICAL FRONT AND BACK END INMATE SERVICES. THE FORMAL OPENING OF THE IPC IS EXPECTED IN APRIL.

VIDEO VISITATION AT THE JAIL HAS CONTINUED TO GARNER POSITIVE FEEDBACK FROM THE PUBLIC. WE HAVE AND WILL CONTINUE TO MAKE UPGRADES TO BETTER ACCOMMODATE THE VISITING PUBLIC. THIS HAS INCLUDED

EXPANDING HOURS FROM 11 AM TO 10 PM, INCREASING THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN ALLOWED TO VISIT, EXPANDING TO COMMUNITY BASED FACILITIES INCLUDING THE MLK LIBRARY LOCATION AND DEANWOOD RECREATION CENTER WHICH HAVE BOTH BEEN VERY SUCCESSFUL. WE ARE CURRENTLY ASSESSING OTHER POSSIBLE FUTURE LOCATIONS WITH BOTH DPR AND DCPL TO FURTHER ENHANCE ACCESSIBILITY AT THE NEIGHBORHOOD LEVEL.

TO INCREASE PRIVACY AND LIMIT OTHER DISTRACTIONS DURING THE VISITATION PROCESS, MONITORS ON THE HOUSING BLOCKS ARE CURRENTLY BEING RELOCATED TO AREAS WITH LESS TRAFFIC. AS PART OF THIS EFFORT, ADDITIONAL VIDEO UNITS ARE ALSO BEING ADDED TO MOST HOUSING BLOCKS TO FURTHER INCREASE VISITATION OPPORTUNITIES. THE TARGETED COMPLETION DATE FOR THESE UPGRADES IS IN APRIL.

WE CONTINUE TO FOCUS ON ENHANCING OPERATIONAL PROTOCOLS AROUND SUICIDE PREVENTION AS REPORTED IN OUR HEARING ON NOVEMBER 7. THE OPERATIONAL ENHANCEMENTS DETAILED HAVE BEEN ONGOING AND ENCOMPASS DOUBLE CELLING UNLESS SECURITY RISKS ARE INVOLVED, ENHANCING THE MENTAL HEALTH ASSESSMENT AND MEDICAL RECORDS DOCUMENTATION PROCESSES, LIMITING ACCESS TO RAZORS, INCREASING SECURITY CHECKS ON SPECIAL UNITS, AND ASSIGNING A BOOKING OFFICER TO THE INTAKE FUNCTION TO FLAG POTENTIALLY VULNERABLE INMATES FOR MENTAL HEALTH INTERVENTION.

ADDITIONAL PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE AROUND ENHANCED COMMUNICATION WITH OUR CRIMINAL JUSTICE PARTNERS, STAFF TRAINING, AND DEVELOPMENT OF A SUICIDE RESISTANT CELL PROTOTYPE.

THE MULTIDISCIPLINARY SUICIDE PREVENTION TASK FORCE, LED BY MEDICAL DIRECTOR DR. BETH MYNETT CONTINUES ITS EFFORTS TO COMPREHENSIVELY ADDRESS SUICIDE PREVENTION IN OUR FACILITIES. EVALUATING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A STEP DOWN MENTAL HEALTH UNIT FOCUSED ON CONTINUITY OF CARE FOR THOSE WITH VARYING MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES WILL BE A NEXT STEP---AND THROUGH THE LEADERSHIP AND DIRECTION OF THE TASK FORCE, THE SUICIDE RESISTANT CELL PROTOTYPE REFERENCED EARLIER HAS BEEN COMPLETED IN BOTH THE JAIL AND CENTRAL CELL BLOCK.

WE HAVE ALSO MOVED FORWARD AGGRESSIVELY WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF FEDERAL PRISON RAPE ELIMINATION ACT (PREA) OPERATIONAL PROTOCOLS THROUGHOUT THE JAIL. THIS IS A NATIONAL MANDATE THAT CONTRIBUTES TO THE SAFETY AND WELL BEING OF MEN AND WOMEN ENTRUSTED TO THE CUSTODY OF DCDOC. LAST YEAR, DOC

WAS AWARDED A TWO YEAR DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE GRANT FOR PREA IMPLEMENTATION AND TRAINING AND WILL BE AT THE FOREFRONT OF JAILS NATIONALLY. WORK IN THIS AREA HAS INCLUDED THE DEPARTMENT HOSTING AN EXTERNAL INVESTIGATIVE MAPPING SESSION WITH PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS INCLUDING THE RAPE CRISIS CENTER, VICTIM SERVICES, MPD, THE US MARSHALLS, SANE, THE US ATTORNEY'S OFFICE AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FORENSIC SCIENCE-- TO ASSESS WHERE WE ARE COLLECTIVELY, LOOK AT HOW WE CAN IMPROVE OUR COORDINATED RESPONSE PROTOCOLS AND DEVELOP MORE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES.

ADDITIONALLY A NEW 8 HOUR PREA TRAINING CURRICULUM HAS BEEN DEVELOPED FOR OUR IN-SERVICE, PRE-SERVICE AND BASIC CORRECTIONAL TRAINING WHICH INCLUDES HANDS ON SCENARIO BASED INSTRUCTION INSIDE THE FACILITY. ALL AGENCY STAFF ARE PROJECTED

TO COMPLETE THIS TRAINING BY OCTOBER 2014. AS PART OF THIS TRAINING EFFORT, THE DEPARTMENT'S PREA COORDINATOR IS NOW CONDUCTING ROLL CALL FORUMS TO CONTINUALLY EDUCATE STAFF AND FURTHER STRENGTHEN EFFORTS TO PREVENT, DETECT, AND RESPOND TO ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT, ASSAULTS OR ABUSE.

DURING THE SUMMER OF 2013 WE ALSO MOVED OUR ENTIRE HEADQUARTERS OPERATION FROM GRIMKE SCHOOL TO THE REEVES CENTER. THIS PROJECT, WHICH WAS ALSO A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT BETWEEN DOC AND DGS, IS ONE THAT HAD BEEN PLANNED FOR YEARS AND FINALLY IMPLEMENTED IN FY 2013.

CONSEQUENTLY, WE ARE PLEASED THAT THE DOC AND DGS TEAMS WERE ABLE TO WORK IN PARTNERSHIP TO ACCOMPLISH THIS SUCCESSFUL RELOCATION.

THERE ARE A NUMBER OF OTHER NOTEWORTHY ACCOMPLISHMENTS I WILL BRIEFLY MENTION AT THIS TIME. THEY ARE:

- ✓ PURCHASE AND INSTALLATION OF NEXTALK VIDEO REMOTE INTERPRETING (VRI) SERVICES SOFTWARE WHICH IS A VIDEO-TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICE PROVIDING ON-CALL SIGN LANGUAGE OR SPOKEN LANGUAGE INTERPRETING SERVICES. THIS IS DONE THROUGH A REMOTE OR OFFSITE INTERPRETER, IN ORDER TO COMMUNICATE WITH THOSE IN OUR CUSTODY HAVING COMMUNICATION BARRIERS. DOC IS EQUIPPING LAPTOPS AND DESKTOPS AROUND THE FACILITIES WITH THIS SERVICE, THEREBY CREATING BOTH PERMANENT AND PORTABLE VRI STATIONS FOR DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING INMATES.
- ✓ INSTALLATION OF A ROUNDS TRACKING SYSTEM FOR STAFF ON ALL HOUSING UNITS.

- ✓ IMPLEMENTATION OF IRIS SCANNING FOR INMATE IDENTIFICATION.
- ✓ INCREASING THE NUMBER OF MONITORS USED FOR FACILITY SECURITY SURVEILLANCE.
- ✓ IMPLEMENTATION OF A TRANSACTION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM THAT STREAMLINES THE RECORDS OFFICE WORKFLOW.
- ✓ MODERNIZATION OF OUR DATA CENTER, VIRTUALIZING DOC'S SERVERS, AND ENHANCING SURVEILLANCE STORAGE CAPACITY.
- ✓ SUCCESSFULLY BIDDING THE INMATE HEALTH SERVICES CONTRACT WITH THE EVALUATION PROCESS TARGETED FOR COMPLETION IN MAY OF THIS YEAR.
- ✓ WORKING COLLABORATIVELY WITH OUR FEDERAL PARTNERS TO ESTABLISH HOUSING FOR SHORT TERM

SENTENCED FELONS AT THE CTF--RESULTING IN MORE
EQUITABLE REIMBURSEMENT FOR THE DISTRICT.

- ✓ BEGINNING UTILIZATION OF COMPAS, AN EVIDENCE
BASED ASSESSMENT TOOL WITH WOMEN HOUSED AT
THE CTF----THIS TOOL SUPPORTS BOTH PRE AND POST
RELEASE PLANNING.
- ✓ MOVING TO BEGIN USE OF INTEROPERABLE RADIOS
FOR DOC STAFF ASSIGNED TO COMMUNITY OR
OUTSIDE FUNCTIONS—THESE RADIOS ARE CURRENTLY
USED BY BOTH MPD AND FEMS.
- ✓ UPGRADING THE INMATE HEALTH INFORMATION
SYSTEM, THE ELECTRONIC MEDICAL RECORD, AND THE
PHARMACY INFORMATION SYSTEM.

ANOTHER IMPORTANT MILESTONE IN 2013 WAS THE
ESTABLISHMENT OF A PARTNERSHIP WITH THE NATIONAL
INSTITUTE OF CORRECTIONS FOCUSING ON LEADERSHIP
DEVELOPMENT AT ALL LEVELS. A FIRST STEP HAS BEEN

DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW VISION FOR THE DEPARTMENT THAT SETS THE TONE FOR WHERE WE ARE GOING AS AN AGENCY. OUR VISION IS TO BECOME A BENCHMARK CORRECTIONS AGENCY AND ONE THAT SERVES WITH PRIDE, PROFESSIONALISM AND PASSION IN CARING FOR HUMAN LIVES. STAFF HAS BEEN ASKED TO COME TOGETHER AND LOOK AT WAYS WE CAN IMPROVE INTERNAL COMMUNICATION AT ALL LEVELS AND GAIN BUY-IN AND TRUE COMMITMENT FROM EACH AND EVERY DCDOC EMPLOYEE. WE HAVE FORMED AN EMPLOYEE “VISION TEAM” TO ENGAGE STAFF IN THE PROCESS, SOLICIT FEEDBACK AND HELP IMPLEMENT POSITIVE CHANGE THROUGHOUT THE AGENCY.

OUR OPERATIONAL PRIORITIES FOR 2014 WILL BE TO REMAIN VIGILANT IN PROMOTING SUICIDE PREVENTION, TO FINALIZE PROCUREMENT OF A COMPREHENSIVE, COST EFFECTIVE INMATE HEALTH SERVICES CONTRACT, TO

FULLY IMPLEMENT ALL PREA OPERATIONAL AND PROGRAMMATIC PROTOCOLS, TO BROADEN REENTRY TO INCLUDE A PRE-RELEASE EMPLOYMENT READINESS COMPONENT, AND TO UPGRADE JACCS, OUR CURRENT INMATE INFORMATION SYSTEM TO A WEB BASED PLATFORM THAT WILL BETTER CAPTURE AND INTEGRATE CRITICAL OFFENDER INFORMATION.

AT THIS POINT I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO RECOGNIZE THE GENEROSITY OF OUR DOC WORKFORCE WHICH AGAIN THIS YEAR SURPASSED ALL CITY AGENCIES IN D.C. ONE FUND CONTRIBUTIONS WITH A TOTAL OF NEARLY \$91,000 DONATED BY OUR EMPLOYEES---A COMPASSIONATE TEAM OF PROFESSIONALS THAT I PROUDLY APPLAUD FOR THEIR YEARS OF KIND AND UNSELFISH GIVING.

I WILL NOW ADDRESS QUESTIONS FROM THE COMMITTEE REGARDING DCDOC'S PERFORMANCE AND OPERATIONAL MANDATES.